TESTIMONIALS TO THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON.

I will take leave to address a few lines to you on the subject of a national monument to the late Duke of Wellington. I trust that in this great metropolis, the example set by Liverpool will be followed with a greater spirit than has been displayed towards Nelson, to whose memory, after the lapse of nearly half a century, there has been an attempt to raise a monument, which is apparently as far off as ever in being completed.

In raising a monument to Wellington, let it be one that will be worthy of this great city; and what the Government decline doing in regard to expense let it be done by the public at large, and one we should have reason to be proud of as a work of art as well as a monument of gratitude. At present we have not one that is worthy of the name.

In Liverpool, it is suggested to erect a column with a statue on the top. This appears to me to be quite a mistake. As a work of art, I would ask who can judge of the merits of a statue, whether as regards likeness or execution, in such a position. If a committee decide on having a column, let the statue be placed at the base, on a lofty pedestal, and convert the column to some use, as a light for the town. In the city (London), I perceive, it is suggested to erect a charitable institution by the name of the great general. This is a laudable feeling, but there is one point too much overlooked, that of encouraging the artists in this country. Surely they have as much right to look forward for some consideration as well as public and charitable institutions; for if their exertions and talents are overlooked, how are they to subsist? A Subscriber.

*** With due reverence for the memory of Wellington, it seems to us that there is no need of a further memorial of him in the metropolis. Let us deal properly with those that we have.

THE DUKE'S FUNERAL.

The preparations at Chelsea Hospital are being vigorously carried on. The ceiling of the Hall (covered with black cloth crossed diagonally by white cords) is finished, and the walls are in progress. A platform is formed at the end to receive the body and mourners. The lights (gas) will be disposed behind hollow semi-columns fitted with reflectors. The hall is floored with open battens, and so is the covered way (18 feet wide), which has been formed from the Queen's-road. It will be necessary to make arrangements for a *queue* of considerable length, or there will be much mischief done.

Some dissatisfaction has been expressed by correspondents at the fact that the design for the car was intrusted to Professor Semper, the Berlin architect. It will require the united efforts of many establishments to carry out the design in time.

We are glad to find that the objection we raised to the proposed position of the Duke's tomb is becoming generally recognised. It is to be hoped the determination will be changed.

THEATRES AND SCENERY.

The Princess's Theatre. — Mr. Marston's new play in blank verse and modern coats, *Anne Blake*, has many passages of true poetry and good feeling, and succeeds efficiently in raising the emotions the author desired to produce. Still the heroine is not a pleasant person: with all allowances for the trials to which her temper has been subjected, she is so childishly querulous, and so ready to believe any transparent insinuations against her friends that are suggested to her, that she seems scarcely deserving of the trouble taken for her, and the good fortune that awaits her. The rehearsal for the private theatricals is the most finished scene in the play, and is admirably well acted by all the parties engaged in it, Mrs. Kean, Mr. Kean, Mrs. Winstanley, and Mr. Walter Lacy. Mr. Kean is particularly good, but his dress is not. He might at all events appear as a gentleman at the close. Although travelling as an *artist*, there is no reason against a portmanteau having followed him.

The scenery, consisting of the hall, library, and drawing-room of the same house, is very appropriate and effective. The breadth and largeness of the parts in the first (a hall with Ionic columns and entrance door), and the execution of the pictures on the walls of the drawing-room, are particularly commendable. Those who scoff at our managers and dramatists for "adapting" French pieces ought, when an original play, like *Anne Blake*, is produced, in justice to go and see it.

Haymarket Theatre.—The same remark will apply with reference to the new comedy here, *Richelieu in Love*, which is written by a lady, rather a bold one, and is chiefly remarkable for terse and sparkling writing, but it is for the most part the sparkle of pounded ice,—there is a want of warmth and feeling. Still the piece amuses. Mrs. Stirling, as the Queen, and Mr. Webster, the Cardinal, do all the acting in the piece, and do it very well. This is more than we can say for Mr. Leigh Murray, who sadly disguises his part.

The New Theatre in Hanover has been completed and opened. The *Athenæum* says,—"The building is very handsome in its architecture, ornamented in front with a fine portico adorned with twelve statues. The two centre figures represent Goethe and Mozart: to the right follow Schiller, Lessing, Shakspeare, Goldoni, and Sophocles; to the left, Beethoven, Carl Maria von Weber, Calderon, Molière, and Terence: the twelve statues are the work either of Hanoverian artists, or of sculptors resident in Hanover, and although not productions of high art, are still very creditable. The internal arrangements are more convenient, and the decorations superior to those of any theatre in Germany, with the exception of the opera-house in Berlin. The theatre contains four rows of boxes, the three lower tiers forming in shape a lyre, and the upper a circle: in front of the lowest range of boxes (parquett logen) runs an open balcony, called a 'peron,' in which are the pleasantest seats in the house: the space devoted to the stalls is large and roomy, containing about 250 numbered places, each in the form of a comfortable arm-chair, the seats of which *rise by a self-acting spring the moment you stand up*, so as to allow space to pass with greater convenience. The boxes are painted outside white with gold, and inside of a dark red colour. The royal lodge occupies the centre of the first and second rows of boxes, and is decorated in the usual style with rich crimson velvet hangings, and gold fringe and tassels. The space between the rows of boxes is ornamented with portraits, in relief, of celebrated poets, musicians, actors, and singers. The ceiling of the theatre is white, with gold, and adorned with eight paintings by Ereling, who is now occupied in designing a new drop-scene. A splendid lustre, with 288 gas jets, lights up the building. The expense of erection has been about 80,000 dollars."

THE METROPOLITAN CENTRAL TERMINUS QUESTION.

On the 1st inst. an influential meeting was held at the London Tavern for the purpose of coming, if possible, to some definite conclusion on this important question. The chair was occupied by Sir James Duke, M.P. who made some appropriate remarks on introducing the originator.

Mr. Pearson addressed the meeting at great length, developing his scheme in a clear and intelligible manner, and admitting that it would require a great outlay of money. He estimated the cost, exclusive of what the railway companies would have to expend, at 2,000,000*l*. The Great Northern had come to a determination to push their line to Farringdon-street, and the citizens might depend on it this would place the other railways at their feet.

The following resolutions were unanimously passed:—

"1st, That this meeting agrees with Mr. Pearson on the general principles upon which the project is founded, and, without pledging ourselves to its several details, we are of opinion that it is a measure of great value to the public, and that a company should be formed to carry it into execution, provided an adequate capital can be obtained, upon satisfactory proof that it will afford a reasonable remuneration for the amount required.

2nd. That a committee be appointed to take the requisite steps to effect this object, upon the distinct understanding and agreement proposed by Mr. Pearson, that no committeeman, director, or subscriber, shall be made liable for past expenses; and that no person shall be employed, and no disbursement incurred, except with a written understanding that Mr. Pearson will defray the charges of taking the requisite steps, and that the deposits shall be paid in the name of trustees; and, if three-fourths of the required capital shall not be subscribed for on or before the 7th day of January next, each subscriber shall receive back his deposit without any deduction whatever."

Of Mr. Pearson's scheme we have more than once expressed opinions; but whatever be its fate, it appears to be evident enough that something to the same end must be done. If it would have been absurd and inconvenient beyond endurance to have had breaks of line on every separate railway in passing through every little town throughout the provinces, how much more inconvenient and absurd is it to have so many breaks of general line in passenger and traffic progress through the great metropolis, across which, to and fro, there is so unequalled a concentration of both. As well might each railway have stopped short at every marsh or every mountain, and have crossed or overcome the difficulty by pack-horses, or some other equally primitive arrangement. The difficulty in the present instance is one merely of money. Difficulties of an engineering nature are entirely out of the question. Even the money question is by no means an unprecedented one.

THE EDINBURGH PLASTERERS.*

The plasterers formed a branch of the wright trade in old times, when panelling and ceiling were constructed of wood. This conjunction of the two trades seems to have been in force even up to the middle of the last century. The plasterers' business is a healthy one. A very large proportion of the Edinburgh plasterers are old men: some of them exceed sixty and seventy years. The muscular exercise of the trade is exceedingly good. The only evil they are subjected to is that of working in currents of air. As regards their general intelligence, education, and temperance, all of these have advanced within the last thirty years. They supply their own tools, which, however, are not expensive. There are about 100 plasterers in Edinburgh and Leith at the present moment. This includes the apprentices, whose number is not ascertained. About three-fourths of the whole are originally from the country.

At the beginning of the present century there were probably more plasterers in Edinburgh than there are at the present day. The wages then were about 16s. or 18s. per week. Up to 1820 they continued pretty evenly at the same rate. During the reign of the building mania they ranged between 24s. and 28s. and in some cases were even higher. At this time there were upwards of 300 plasterers in Edinburgh, the largest number working at one time in the history of the trade. Notwithstanding this, it would have taken these men two years to finish the property in the New Town had the rage continued for six months longer. In 1827 the wages fell to 12s. and 14s. per week. They rose again in 1832 to 15s. and 16s. and a year or two subsequently they rose still more. In 1840, the general wages were from 16s. to 18s. per week. In all of these statements the broken time in winter, together with lost time caused by frost, are not taken into account.

In 1840 the plasterers established a union. In the spring of 1841 they made a demand for increased wages—that is to say, 4d. an hour—which was acceded to on the part of the masters. It is to be observed, however, that for three months in winter plasterers only work

* Condensed from the *Edinburgh News*.

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